

b.) Remarks

Claims 1-27 are pending in this application. Claims 1 and 16 have been amended in various particulars.

The only outstanding issues concern the rejection of the claims based on the prior art. The primary reference in each of these rejections is U.S. Pat. No. 4,833,776 to Wakamiya, *et al.* Specifically, claims 1, 2, 4, 9-19, and 24-26 were rejected as being unpatentable over the Wakamiya, *et al.* patent, in view of either U.S. Pat. 6,076,875 to Neff, *et al.* or U.S. Pat. No. 5,562,320 to Bloomberg, *et al.* In a related rejection, claims 3, 5, 20 and 21 were rejected as being unpatentable over the Wakamiya, *et al.*, Neff, *et al.*, or Bloomberg, *et al.* patents in further view of U.S. Pat. No. 5,996,437 to Novak, *et al.* Claims 6, 8, and 22 were additionally rejected based on the Althaus, *et al.* patent, U.S. Pat. No. 5,255,333. Claims 7 and 23 were further rejected in view of U.S. Pat. No. 4,214,353 to Kalina.

Independent claims 1 and 16 have been amended to describe that the combination of actuators and position detection systems for each of the jaws allows the jaws to be independently positioned in two axes with respect to each other.

This characteristic is important to the present application, which is the alignment of optical components attached to a bench. This independent movement of the jaws is required to enable the careful positioning that is required to achieve the high levels of alignment required.

The claimed combination is not shown by any of the applied references. Moreover, none of the applied references has this capability to independently position the jaws in two axes, independently.

The general explanation for this is that the applied references are generally concerned with the electronics industry, and specifically inserting electrical components into circuit boards. As such, they typically have some ability to grip the electronic component for insertion into the circuit board. For example, the Wakamiya, *et al.*

reference, as conceded by the Examiner, does not have a means for X-axis position detection for the jaws.

While the Blumberg, et al. and the Neff, et al. references do provide for X-axis control, none of these references shows a system where the jaws can be positioned independently and simultaneously in two axes, as claimed. This is generally understandable, since the systems of the applied references are not required to perform the two dimensional alignment, as achieved by the present claimed invention.

For the foregoing reasons, Applicants believe that the rejections should be withdrawn.

Applicants believe that the present application is in condition for allowance. A Notice of Allowance is respectfully solicited. Should any questions arise, the Examiner is encouraged to contact the undersigned.

Respectfully submitted,

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Date: August 7, 2003